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Complete Specification
entitled (54) "METHOD OF AND APPARATUS FOR
FORMING A MULTI-PLY YARN"

ACCOMPANIED BY A PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION

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Applicant (71) COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND
INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION
Actual Inventor (72) BASIL CARMONT ELLIS and
ROBERT TIPPETT

Related Art (56)	461858	(41896/72)	40.7
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The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to us :

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The present invention relates to the production of a stable yarn of the "self-twist" variety.

Australian Patent Specification No. 260,092 describes the formation of a stable multi-strand yarn by first developing alternating zones of opposite twist in a travelling strand and then stabilizing the twist by converging the strand with another strand and allowing it to twist around the other strand. A yarn formed in this manner is known as a "self-twist" yarn.

Developments of this arrangement are disclosed, inter alia, in Australian Patent Specifications Nos. 288,664 and 405,827. In the arrangement described in the latter specification, a strong yarn having at least three ~~or~~ ~~more~~ separate strands is formed in a two-stage "self-twist" process comprising the steps of individually twisting a first strand so that the first strand has repeated along its length successive zones of opposite twist, converging the first strand with a second strand ~~so that the~~ ~~strands~~ twist around one another such as to form a stable first yarn having successive zones of opposite plying twist, twisting said first yarn to superimpose alternately opposite twist in successive zones along its length, and converging the twisted first yarn with a second yarn or further strand so that the two twist around one another to form a stable twisted yarn.

The process of Specification No. 405,827 has proven particularly adaptable to the production of composite yarns in which one or more natural fibre strands are twisted together with one or more synthetic filamentary strands but has suffered somewhat in efficiency from the

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bulky and cumbersome nature of the equipment employed thus far. Access for maintenance and rethreading has also proven undesirably difficult and time consuming.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved method of the apparatus for forming a yarn having at least three strands twisted together which utilizes a modified two-stage "self-twist" process derived from the process disclosed in Specification No. 405,827.

In essence, the invention is based on the intermittent lifting of a travelling strand from a twisting nip formed between two adjacent oppositely moving surfaces.

In one aspect, the invention provides a process in accordance with the above described two-stage "self-twist" process of Australian Patent Specification No. 405,827 characterized in that twisting of the first yarn to superimpose alternately opposite twist in successive zones along its length is carried out by passing the first yarn through a nip defined by a pair of twisting surfaces which are moved continuously in opposite directions transversely of the direction of travel of the yarn so as to impart a twist to the yarn at the nip and by acting on the yarn to intermittently physically lift it from the nip to permit free passage of the yarn past the nip during the intervals in which the yarn is lifted from the nip, and in that the twisting of the first strand and the intermittent lifting of the first yarn from the nip are synchronized in dependence on desired characteristics of the final stable twisted assembly. Twisting of said first strand may advantageously have been effected by passing the strand

between respective forwardly moving oppositely transversely reciprocating twisting surfaces.

This modified two-stage "self-twist" process has proven particularly well suited to the formation of composite yarns comprising a mixture of natural fiber strands and synthetic filamentary strands. Advantageously, the first strand is a natural fiber strand, the second strand a substantially untwisted synthetic monofilament, and the further strand a further substantially untwisted synthetic monofilament. It is to be noted that initial observations indicate that no special advantage would be gained by also twisting the filaments.

Specification No. 405,827 also discloses a two-stage "self-twist" apparatus for producing a stable twisted yarn, comprising first twisting means to impart alternating zones of opposite strand twist to a first strand, first convergence means adjacent the first twisting means to converge said first strand to form a first yarn, second twisting means to superimpose alternating zones of opposite twist upon the first yarn and second convergence means adjacent the second twisting means to converge the first yarn with a further yarn or strand so that the two may twist around one another to form a stable yarn. In accordance with the invention, this apparatus may be modified to provide an apparatus for producing a stable yarn having at least three strands twisted together, comprising first twisting means to impart alternating zones of opposite strand twist to a first strand, first convergence means adjacent the first twisting means to converge the first strand with a second strand to form a first yarn, second

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twisting means to impart alternating zones of opposite twist to the first yarn and second convergence means to converge the first yarn with a further yarn or strand so that the two may twist around one another to form a stable twisted yarn, characterized in that the second twisting means comprises a pair of twisting surfaces defining a nip through which the first yarn may be passed and being arranged for movement in opposite directions transversely of the direction of travel of the first yarn and a device to intermittently lift the first yarn from the nip to permit free passage of the yarn past the nip during the intervals in which the yarn is lifted from the nip, and in that means is provided for synchronizing the operation of the first twisting means and the intermittent lifting device in dependence on desired characteristics of the final stable twisted yarn.

The strand guide is preferably situated immediately beyond the nip relative to the direction of travel of the assembly and may define the point at which the two assemblies are converged. Lifting of the assembly from the nip may be effected in any convenient direction and the expression "lifting" is not to be taken as implying only lifting in a vertical direction.

The strand guide may advantageously comprise a V-shaped recess formed in a guide element fashioned in a suitable material and may also define said convergence means.

The pair of surfaces may be comprised of the outer cylindrical surfaces of a pair of rotatable rollers or discs which are mounted for continuous rotation in the

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same direction.

Throughout this specification reference is made to the "nip" of the twisting surfaces. In current textile terminology the word "nip" is frequently understood to imply that the rollers or like elements which form the nip actually contact one another at the nip position. In this specification it is to be understood that no such limitation

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is intended and that the expression "nip" is used to include the case where the surfaces each contact the strand which is between them but do not contact one another.

The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a two stage "self-twist" unit incorporating apparatus in accordance with a first embodiment of the invention and illustrating one mode of operation of the process of the invention;

Figure 2 is a front elevation of part of the unit of Figure 1;

Figures 3 and 4 are respective cross-sections on the lines 3-3 and 4-4 of Figure 2;

Figure 5 is a cross-section on the line 5-5 of Figure 3;

Figure 6 is a front elevation of part of a unit in accordance with a second embodiment of the invention;

Figure 7 is a side elevation of the unit of Figure 6;

Figure 8 is a perspective of a mounting box incorporated in a modification of the unit of Figures 6 and 7; and

Figure 9 shows the twist distributions in a yarn produced by means of the unit of Figures 1 to 5 and in a yarn produced by a single-stage twister incorporating only rotating discs and no reciprocating rollers.

The illustrated unit includes a conventional drafting apparatus of which only the final feed rolls 10, 11 and aprons 10a, 11a are shown, first twisting means 12 comprising a pair of ~~oscillating~~ ^{axially reciprocating} twisting rollers 13, 14

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of the type illustrated in Figures 1 to 5 of ^{the above referred to} Patent Specification No. 288,664 and second twisting means 16 constructed in accordance with the invention. Rollers 13, 14 are elastomer covered and are accurately positioned and loaded so that sufficient pressure exists between them to achieve the required twisting. The rollers are driven so that they reciprocate ^{axially} in opposite phase and rotate in opposite directions whereby their adjacent surfaces move at substantially the same speed in the direction in which a plurality of side by side but spaced and parallel travelling strands 6 are fed forwardly from rollers 10, 11.

Strands 6 pass between the rollers and are accordingly so twisted by the twisting surfaces provided by the rollers as to exhibit alternate zones of opposite twist along their lengths. Each of the thus twisted strands 6 passes from the rollers 13, 14 to be converged at convergence guide groove 18 formed in guide element 19 with a continuous ~~filamentary~~ ^{monofilament} strand 7. Each strand 6 then twists alternately in the manner described in Australian Patent Specification No. 260,092 to form a two-ply yarn 8. Yarn 8 is then intermittently twisted by the second twisting means 16 before being converged with a second continuous ~~filamentary~~ ^{monofilament} strand 7a in a further strand guide groove 18a formed in a second guide element 19a constituting part of the second twisting means 16. The yarn 8 twists alternately about the ~~strand~~ ^{monofilament} 7a to form a stable three-ply assembly 9 in a manner substantially similar to the mode of formation of the yarn 8, before being led onto a suitable take-up package 9a by an eye guide 9b. ~~Filamentary strands~~ ^{Filaments} 7, 7a are fed from respective ^{air jet} guide tubes 20, 20a interiorly of guide elements 19,

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19a to emerge from small apertures in the guide grooves 18, 18a. An aperture 22 in one of the forward guide elements 19a is clearly depicted in Figure 3, as is a frame arm 21 utilized in correctly supporting the ~~air-jet~~ tubes 20, 20a.

Twisting means 16 includes a plurality of rotating discs 24 rotatably mounted by a pair of ball races 24a, 24b on respective pins 26 fixed to a bracing web 28 having cut outs 28a to receive the travelling yarns 8 (Figure 5). Discs 24 have ~~flat~~ outer cylindrical surfaces 30 and are so mounted in side by side disposition that the surfaces 30 serve, at their successive points of closest approach, as twisting surfaces defining respective twisting nips 32 through which respective ones of yarns 8 are passed. Surfaces 30 should be finished in an elastomer material 30a. Discs 24 are rotatable by a belt drive which incorporates an endless friction belt 34 and a set of appropriately disposed belt guide wheels 38 rotatably mounted on bracing web 28. Belt 34 friction drives reduced diameter axial sleeve extensions 25 of discs 24 and is itself driven by means to be described from a drive shaft 39 which also drives the rollers 13, 14.

It will be apparent that discs 24 rotate in the same rotational sense whereby their cylindrical surfaces 30 move, at the nips, in opposite directions transversely of the direction of travel of the associated ~~strands~~ ^{yarns} 8 so as to impart a twist to the ~~strands~~ ^{yarns} at the nips. One way of imparting to ~~strands~~ ^{yarns} 8 the alternately opposite twist necessary for the alternating twist process is to periodically interrupt twisting of the ~~strands~~ ^{yarns} at the nips 32. This is achieved in accordance with the invention by intermittently lifting the travelling strands from their respective nip by subjecting the guide elements 19a

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located immediately beyond the nips 32 to an appropriate cyclic motion.

One mechanism for oscillating guide elements 19a is depicted in Figures 1 to 5 and includes an open-sided cube 40 defined in part by rigid vertical end panels 42, 42a, and respective upper and lower webs 44, 44a fashioned in a resiliently flexible material such as spring steel or a suitable polymer. Guide elements 19a are fixed, via a cross beam 48 and a post 49, to panel 42 whilst the cube is in turn mounted on the machine framework by virtue of panel 42a being rigidly fixed to a frame member 29. Panel 42a also carries a bearing 53 for a shaft 45 which extends through an oversized aperture 46 in the opposite panel 42 and itself carries a belt drive wheel 50 and cam 47 located exteriorly of the cube adjacent panel 42. Cam 47 engages a cam follower 52 mounted on post 49.

Drive wheel 50 is uniformly driven in synchronisation with the discs 24 and rollers 13, 14 from shaft 39 by a second endless friction belt 51 which passes about a number of belt guide wheels including one, 51a, which forms part of a speed enhancement coupling for belt 34.

Cam 47 is shaped so that, as the drive wheel, shaft and cam are rotated in unison, the cam follower executes a periodic up and down motion, carrying post 49, panel 42, beam 48 and guide elements 19a with it as it does so. Each yarn 8 is thereby periodically lifted from its nip 32 to permit free passage of the yarn past the nip. The aperture 46 in panel 42 must of course be adequate to maintain clearance about shaft 45 during this up and down movement by panel 42. Flexible panels 44 serve

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to provide a cushioned shock-absorbing mounting for the guide element during its reciprocating movement under the action of the cam. The rise and fall time of the cam mechanism should of course be as short as possible to minimise fibre slippage as the yarns move in and out the nips. Thus, although an eccentric cam would be acceptable, it has been found much more advantageous to employ a shape with a limited rise and fall time. For example, a shape which produces a ^{144°}~~149°~~ dwell at both top and bottom of the stroke with a 36° rise and fall has proved highly satisfactory.

Since the reciprocating rollers 13, 14, discs 24, 25 and oscillating guide elements 19a are driven from a common shaft 39, synchronisation of the first and second twisting means to obey any desired uniform phase relationship can be achieved. This is of course essential if an optimum yarn substantially uniform over its length is to be ultimately produced.

In particular, it is desirable in general to choose a phase difference between the two twisting means which will give, in the final yarn, an optimum twist distribution which balances maximum twist intensity and minimum twist changeover length. It is found, for example, that for a separation between the roller nips and the disc nips of 10cm and a cycle length (that is, the length of output yarn embodying one complete twisting cycle of 22cm, the phase difference between the twisting means, or, more precisely, the phase difference should be adjusted so that the difference between the first and second stage wrap in the final yarn is in the range $115^\circ \pm 15^\circ$.

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It will of course be appreciated that the separation of the roller and disc nips must in general be sufficient to provide space for twist storage and a distance approximately equal to one half the cycle length, as defined above, is typically adequate.

Figures 6 and 7 illustrate an alternative arrangement for effecting cyclic up and down movement of the guide elements 19a. In this arrangement, the cross-beam 48' supporting the guide elements is mounted to bracing web 28' by ^{two} ~~respective~~ pairs of tensioned spring steel webs 44' and 44a' which perform a function similar to the webs 44, 44a in the embodiment of Figures 1 to 5. The open cube 40' now takes the form of a rigid mounting frame for fixedly supporting belt drive wheel 50' and cam 47' which function as before. In this case, however, the cam follower 52' is fixed directly to the cross-beam 48'.

In place of the spring steel webs utilized in resiliently mounting the guide elements 19a in the arrangements of Figures 1 to 5 and 6 and 7, a single thin walled box formed of a suitable resiliently deformable polymeric material may be used to mount the cross-beam ^{48 or 48'} ~~38 or 38'~~ to bracing web 28 or 28'. Such a box is illustrated at 44" in Figure 8.

Figure 9 shows the twist distributions in a yarn produced by means of the unit of Figures 1 to 5 (curve A) and in a yarn obtained from a single-stage unit incorporating only the twisting discs but not the reciprocating rollers.

It is immediately apparent that the two twisting stages interact in a clearly observable manner. From

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examination of many yarn twist distributions and from observations made at the spinners during trials, it can be postulated that the twisting sequence relating to the second stage twist distribution is approximately as follows:

1. Rollers 13, 14 start delivery of "S" twist yarns.
2. Yarn enters the nip 32 of twisting discs 24, the guide 19a being lowered.
3. Disc output twist and second stage filament wrap is "S" twist and therefore "Z" in the zone between the rollers and discs. The rate of twist insertion by the discs is several times greater than that of the rollers and the resulting twist stored in this zone is therefore "Z". Because of the negative contribution of the oscillating roller twist, however, the build up of twist in the intermediate zone is not typical of the approach to the steady state of false twisting and the "S" twist output from the discs does not decay as rapidly as would otherwise be expected (zone E in Figure 9).
4. The rollers change to a "Z" twist output.
5. The yarn is lifted clear of the nip between the twisting discs by the adjustable guide 19a and the storage of "Z" twist in the zone between the rollers and discs is gradually fed through the second stage convergence 18a producing "Z" twist second stage filament wrap. This "Z" twist would normally be expected to decay exponentially but since the output from the oscillating rollers is also "Z" twist at this time decay is delayed (zone F).

If, however, due to conditions of high torque and/or lack of adequate restraint at the second stage

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convergence the stored "Z" twist propagates rapidly instead of feeding through, the distribution becomes excessively skew and the yarn produced is unsuitable for knitting purposes.

It is to be emphasized that the above postulated sequence is by way of suggestion only and is not to be considered in any way binding or limiting upon the scope of monopoly afforded the applicant.

The above described apparatus has a number of important advantages relative to a machine in which both twisting stages comprise reciprocating rollers, such as the arrangement described and illustrated in ^{the above referred to} Specification No. 405,827. A completely open top in the second stage of the twisting operation makes for easy assessability for threading and maintenance. The complexity of simultaneous rotation and reciprocation is dispensed with and accurate bearings such as air bearings are not required. The twist may be controlled simply by varying the speed of the discs which is itself independent of cycle length. It is also to be noted that the kind of problems which have been found to arise with earlier apparatus on pulling of a strand assembly between elastomeric surfaces is of no significance in the apparatus of the invention. This is due to the greater strength and stability afforded by the synthetic filament.

On comparing a three-ply yarn produced by the illustrated unit with a similar yarn produced on a machine in which both twisting stages comprise a pair of oppositely rotating transversely reciprocating rollers, the applicants have discerned an improvement in overall yarn quality. The yarn might be generally described as being somewhat tidier

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and to have a lower fault rate and this appears to be related to improved interlocking between the staple fibres and the ^{filaments}~~filamentary strands~~. The incidence of "strip back", in which the staple fibres slip rearwardly along the filament, is somewhat reduced. With corresponding twisting conditions, a final yarn exhibiting higher twist and shorter twist change-over regions is obtained.

EXAMPLE.

Wool of 21 μ and 22 tex was converged 1.0cm ^{of apparatus of the form shown in Figures 1 to 5} beyond the reciprocating roller nip with a filament of nylon 66 and the resultant yarn converged at the front cyclically moveable guide elements with a further filament of nylon 66 to form a final three-ply yarn. The cycle length was 22 cms and the speed of the rotating discs 8,000 revolutions per minute. The front guide elements were displaced 1mm beyond the nip between the discs and a 100 μ gap maintained at this nip. The yarn was drawn at a speed of 300 metres per minute under a tension of 30 grams. The cam was shaped for a symmetrical characteristic having a 36° rise and a 36° fall.

It was found that the two-ply yarn produced at the first twisting stage had a ply twist of 48 twists per half cycle and a twist change-over length of 14.5mm. The final three-ply yarn exhibited a second stage ply twist of 45 twists per half cycle and a change-over length of 14.5 mm. The measured tenacity was 90mnewtons/tex.

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Apparatus for producing a stable yarn having at least three strands twisted together, comprising:

first twisting means to impart alternating zones of opposite strand twist to a first strand;

first convergence means adjacent the first twisting means to converge the first strand with a second strand to form a first yarn;

second twisting means to impart alternating zones of opposite twist to the first yarn; and

second convergence means to converge the first yarn with a further yarn or strand so that the two may twist around one another to form a stable twisted yarn;

wherein the second twisting means includes a pair of twisting surfaces defining a nip through which the first yarn may be passed and being arranged for movement in opposite directions transversely of the direction of travel of the first yarn, and a device to intermittently lift the first yarn from the nip to permit free passage of the yarn past the nip during the intervals in which the yarn is lifted from the nip;

and wherein means is provided for synchronizing the operation of the first twisting means and the intermittent lifting device in dependence on desired characteristics of the final stable twisted yarn.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the device to intermittently lift the yarn from the nip comprises a strand guide disposed adjacent the nip and means for causing the guide to execute a cyclic motion by virtue of which the yarn is intermittently lifted from the nip.

3. Apparatus according to claim 2 wherein the strand guide also defines said second convergence means.

4. Apparatus according to claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the pair of twisting surfaces is comprised of the outer cylindrical surfaces of a pair of rotatable rollers or discs which are mounted for continuous rotation in the same direction.

5. Apparatus according to any preceding claim wherein the first twisting means comprises a pair of twisting surfaces defining a twisting nip between them, which surfaces are arranged to move in the direction of travel of the first strand and to oppositely axially reciprocate transversely of said direction.

6. A method of forming a stable yarn having at least three strands twisted together comprising the steps of:-

individually twisting a first strand so that the first strand has repeated along its length successive zones of opposite twist;

converging the first strand with a second strand so that the strands twist around one another such as to form a stable first yarn having successive zones of opposite plying twist;

twisting said first yarn to superimpose alternately, opposite twist in successive zones along its length; and

converging the twisted first yarn with a second yarn or further strand so that the two twist around one another to form a stable twisted yarn,

wherein the twisting of the first yarn is carried out by passing the first yarn through a twisting nip in which a twist is imparted to the yarn and by acting on the yarn to intermittently physically lift it from the nip to permit free passage of the yarn past the nip during the intervals

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in which the yarn is lifted from the nip;

and wherein the twisting of the first strand and the intermittent lifting of the first yarn from the nip are synchronized in dependence on desired characteristics of the final stabel twisted assembly.

7. A method according to claim 6 wherein the first strand is a natural fibre strand, the second strand a substantially untwisted synthetic filament and the further strand a further substantially untwisted synthetic filament.

8. A method according to claim 6 or 7 wherein twisting of said first strand is effected by passing the strand between respective twisting surfaces which move in the direction of travel of the strand and oppositely axially reciprocate transversely of said direction.

9. A method of or apparatus for forming a stable yarn substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

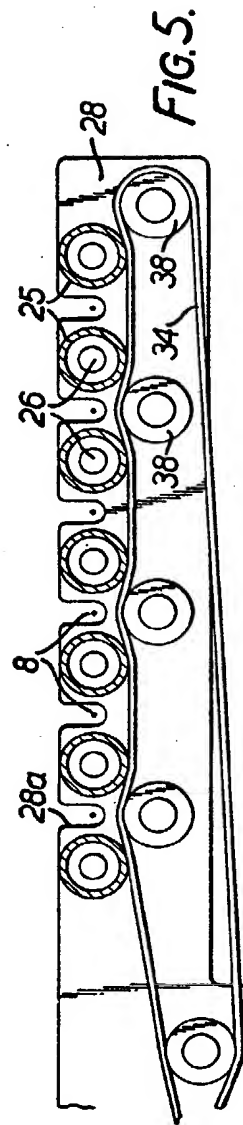
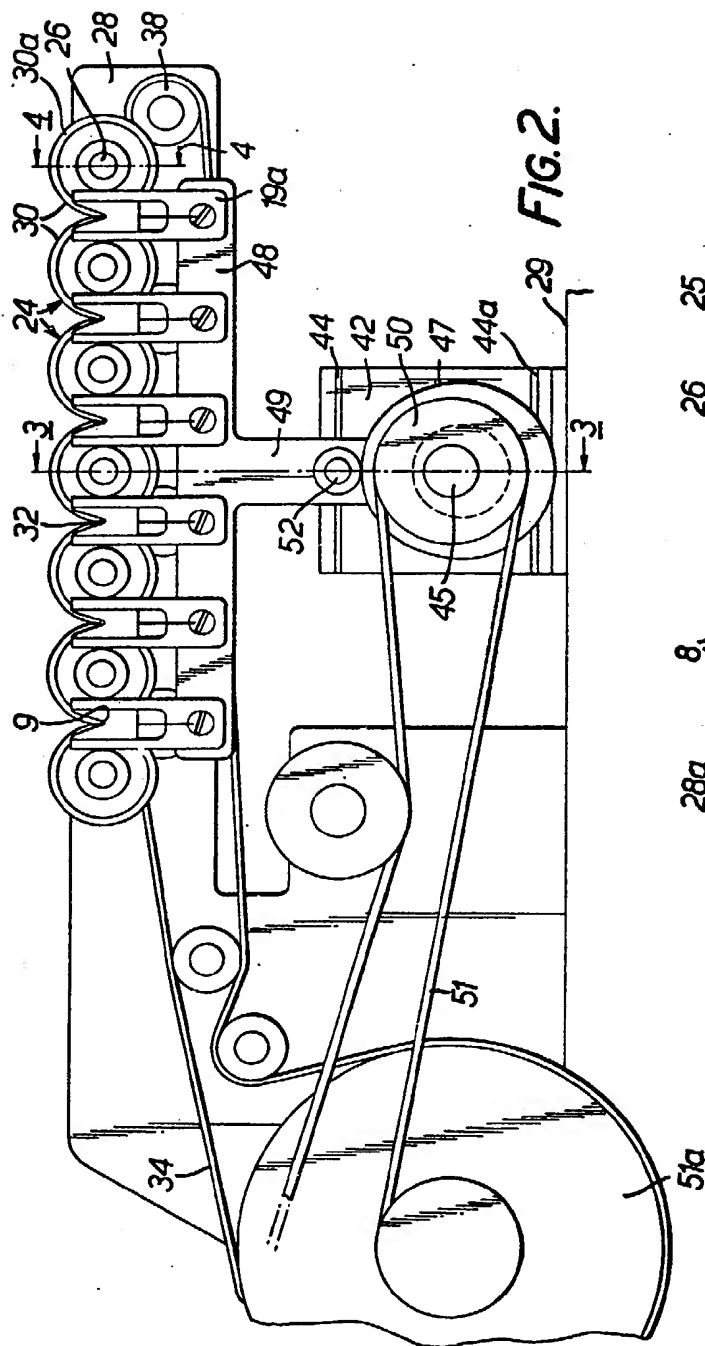
10. A yarn when formed with the apparatus of any one of claims 1 to 5 and 9 or by the method of any one of claims 6 to 9.

Dated this 2nd day of September, 1977

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL
RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.
By their Patent Attorneys,
DAVIES & COLLISON.



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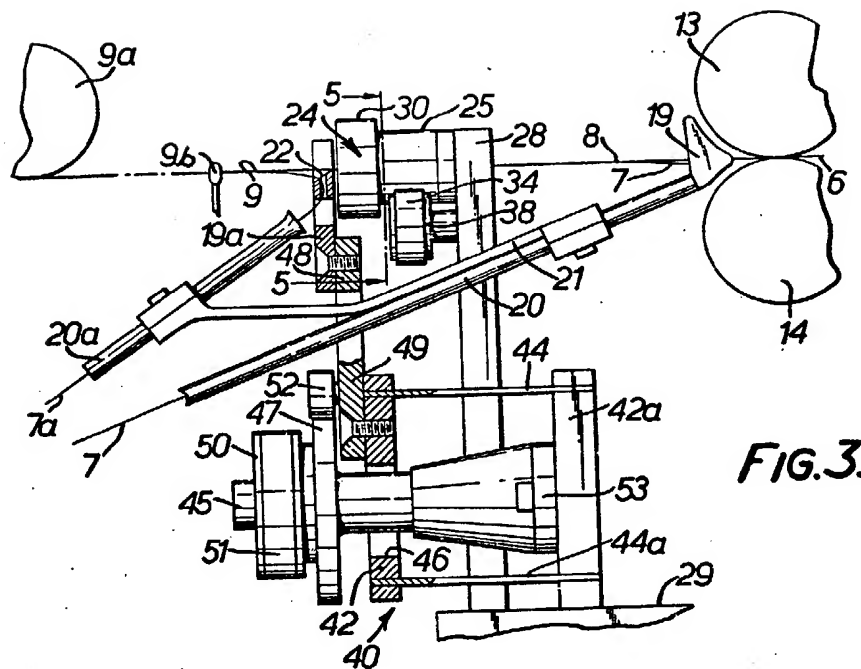


FIG. 3.

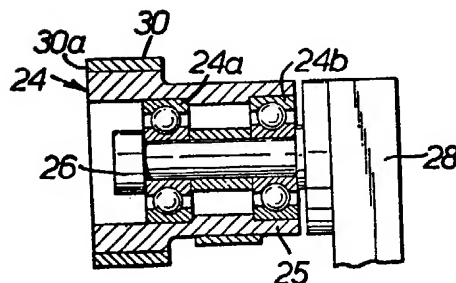


FIG. 4.

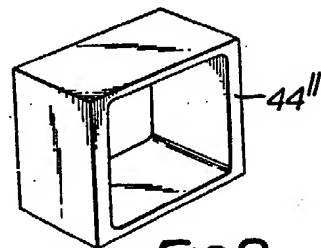


FIG. 8.

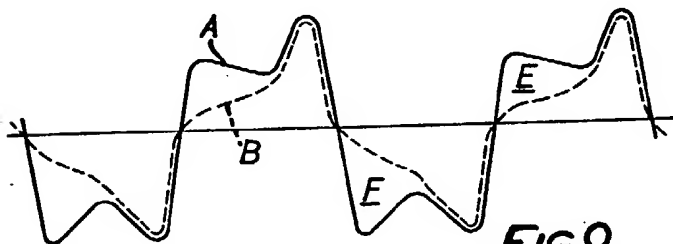


FIG. 9.

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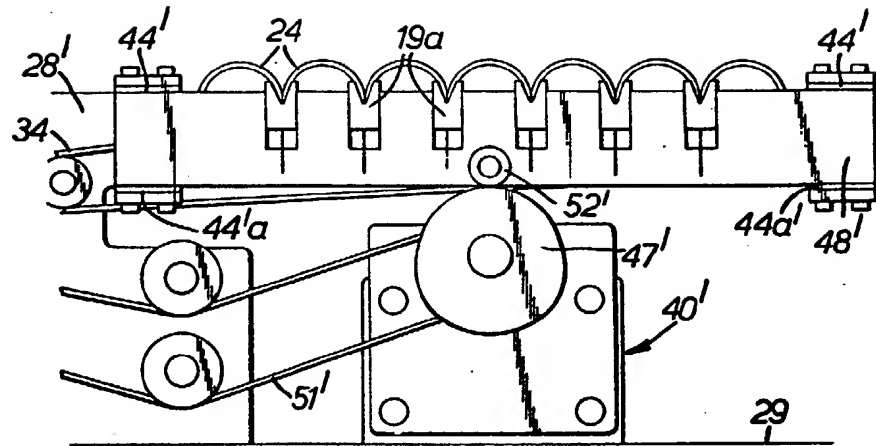


FIG. 6.

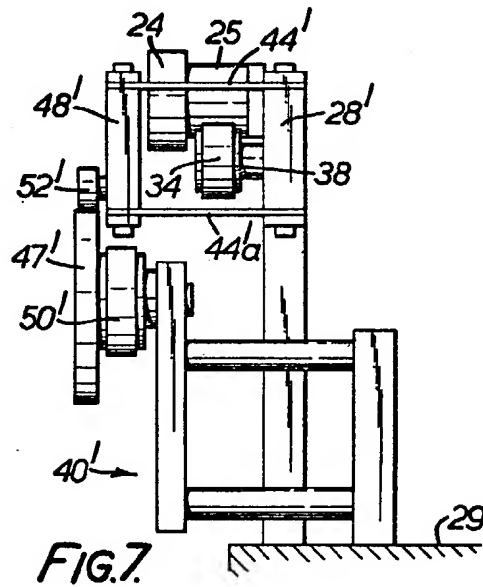


FIG. 7.

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